

JAPAN'S SOVIET-HELD PRISONERS OF WAR

by

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by *Grace*
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During the first few months after the end of the Pacific War, some 6,614,393 Japanese civilians and members of the armed forces were stranded outside Japan in areas ranging from the by-passed and conquered Pacific islands over through Southeast Asia to Malaya and beyond. Some of the overseas Japanese were in British, some in Dutch, some in American, and some in Chinese Nationalist hands. The powerful Kwantung Army, based in Manchukuo and constituting the cream of the fighting forces of Japan, was bagged by the Soviet Union during its six-day so-called "war" against Japan in Manchukuo. And the Communist Party of Mao Tze-tung held its own collection of Japanese captured during the war or immediately after the surrender of Nippon.

The immensity of the task of repatriation can be appreciated when it is recalled that by July of 1947, and in strict compliance with the pledge made in the Potsdam Declaration, General Mac Arthur's command had brought back to Nippon no less than 5,360,000 of the overseas Japanese. This could be compared with the movement from the United States to Europe within less than two years of the entire population of Arizona, Idaho, Maine, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Oregon, and Washington, D.C. There was no needless suffering, no concentration camps, no major epidemic. It was one of the greatest and most successful mass population movements of modern history.

But if the non-Russian-held repatriates came back in a hurry, the policy of the Soviet Union was markedly

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different from that of the Allies and constituted a deliberate and cynical violation of the spirit of the Potsdam Declaration. As of the 26th of May 1949, General Mac Arthur reported in the official SCAP document "Japanese Prisoners of War: Life and Death in Soviet P. W. Camps", * all over-seas Japanese were by then repatriated except a reported 60,312 in Manchuria, 324,593 in Soviet Siberia, and 84,613 in the Soviet-held islands of Karafuto and the Kuriles.

After months of negotiation, the Soviet Union reached agreement with SCAP on the 12th of December 1946 providing for the repatriation of 50,000 Japanese each month from Soviet areas, with General Mac Arthur held responsible for provision of vessels, food, and just about everything except the POW's. During 1947, the civilians from the Soviet zones poured back at the excessive rate of 90,000 per month, with Allied port teams in Japan taxed to utter capacity what with the DDT de-lousing treatments, feeding, re-clothing, and then shipment of the repatriates to their native places as rapidly as they arrived.

As SCAP reports: "When repatriation to Japan was opened...the Soviets chose the weak, infirm, and aged for return...They could not work and would contribute nothing to the internal economy of the Soviet Union. It was hardly worthwhile to indoctrinate them."

Then just as suddenly as the excessive arrival of

POW's the stream of repatriates from Soviet Russia

* Issued by GHQ at Tokyo, Japan, 1950. Quoted hereinafter without further reference.

stopped. Occasional letters came through, the ashes of Japanese soldiers who died in Soviet captivity were returned to Japan, but the younger men of the crack Kwantung Army remained behind in the expanding Soviet iron curtain in Asia. Stories began to circulate around Japan by the end of 1947 relating that the Japanese Kwantung Army was busily building new Siberian railways for the Soviets. As SCAP reports, during this period the Soviets sifted and further classified the remaining prisoners: "Older, high-ranking officers were sent to segregated camps; medium rank officers...were segregated. The residue consisted mainly of younger, inexperienced naive men whose minds had not hardened into thought patterns which would adjudge the preferred ideology in the light of firmly-rooted beliefs and opinions."

There is concrete, factual evidence that the Soviet butchers cynically and brutally let the grim reaper winnow out those unfit for Soviet care or unable to withstand the rigours of the Soviet slave labour programme. Thus the calculated death rate in Soviet prison camps during the period up to 1948, and based on statistics deriving from interviews of thousands of returnees, is given by SCAP as follows:

Year	Death Percentage	Dead
1945	10.0%	272,349
1946	7.0%	77,816
1947	3.7%	19,668
1948	2.0%	4,208

Returned prisoners testify that grim slave labour programmes initially were enforced to winnow out the weak. Thus in October of 1947, a Father Iwanaga Shizuo returned from Siberia in an emaciated condition, reported that when he fell ill after one year of slave labour in the Ukraine the Soviets gave him a one-month indoctrination course in Communism before shipping him back to Japan. Dr. Ryunosuke Abe, once vice-director of the Central Scientific Laboratory of the South Manchuria Railway, returned to Japan to write a book, An Uninvited State Guest (Manyare Zaru Kokuhin) relating his experiences when under Soviet control. After capture, he had worked with the Soviet Chinese 8th Route Army. Another repatriate, who returned to Japan during December of 1948, reported: "A large number of people died during the first post-war winter from 1945 to 1946 and from my experience I presume that most of them have not been reported. The battalion to which I belonged at the time of surrender, for example, shrank from 1,100 men to some 300 in the next year. Due to the absence of regular name lists, the names of the 700 dead mostly became obscure." A repatriate from Mongolia testified after his return to Nippon: "Only 225 prisoners out of more than 600 survived." A prisoner returned from the Soviet Union reported: "Our battalion of 350 men was detained in the 3rd P. W. Camp in Khabarovsk. About 250 men died from illness and malnutrition."

By December of 1947 repatriations had dropped to 4,000 per month, and then during the first four months

of 1948 they stopped completely, in complete and brutal violation of previous Soviet promises to SCAP. As SCAP reports: "With the beginning of 1948, many repatriates have reported, the Soviets began to treat Japanese POW's more kindly." Meanwhile repatriates in Japan reported that of the 700,000 Japanese POW's remaining under Soviet control, some 484,000 were inside the Soviet zone, 198,000 were in Sakhalin and the Kuriles, 3,500 in North Korea and Soviet Dairen. Repatriates also revealed that Japanese POW's were working in Khabarovsk, Komsonlinsk, Vladivostok, Nahodka, Irkutsk, Tashkent, and other Soviet cities and areas. Ten thousand hand-picked Japanese officers and soldiers of the Kwantung Army were reported in the Soviet Ukraine and Moscow areas, both a long way from Tokyo. Curiously, the reporting of large numbers in Sakhalin indicated that the number of Japanese POW's in that Soviet area was increasing thus further indicating that the Soviet was concentrating Japanese POW's there for some future move. As hundreds of thousands of Japanese remained behind the Soviet iron curtain, the Japanese during early 1948 were writing letters to their daily news-papers demanding action in enforcement of the provisions of the Potsdam Declaration. The giant Mitsukoshi Department Store in Tokyo presented a ten-day exhibit from the 1st of April showing the depressed life and primitive condition of Japanese illegally held in the Soviet area. The Soviet Union continued to claim that the sharp decrease in repatriation was due to bad weather.

But when in the snowy mid-January of 1948 the mystery ship *Dvina* drifted helplessly between the Soviet Kuriles and Japanese Hokkaido, Allied aircraft that flew to the assistance of the Soviet vessel observed "hundreds of objects on the deck that resembled human beings." This was a cruel blow to Soviet propaganda; for only one week before the *Dvina* incident burly Soviet General Kislenko of the Russian Mission in Tokyo claimed that "ice and dangerous waters prevent further repatriation." The lies of Kislenko were further denied by repatriate Toshio Tamura who was in the Soviet port of Nahodka from December 1947 through to May of 1948. He reported: "Coming back to Japan I was surprised to learn that the Soviet authorities gave as reasons for suspending repatriations the difficulty of rail transportation and the freezing of the port of Nahodka during the winter season. Through my experience I want to stress the flimsiness of their pretexts and emphasize that transportation is possible during the winter. There was not even a day that Soviet vessels were unable to come into the port." (Bold author's.)

Thus unimpeachable evidence indicates that with the weak killed off, the lame, the halt, and the blind returned to Nippon, the Soviet turned to development of the remaining and healthy hundreds of thousands which it held. Although the POW's were forced to labour long and hard, there was increasing and intensive propaganda carried on to "clarify" the minds of the Soviet-held Japanese. Segregation of the POW's by age and intelligence simplified the indoctrination

process. Soviet-sponsored "Democratic Leagues" were formed and those Japanese "POW's" who proved themselves emenable to the discipline of their Soviet masters were given preference in obtaining newspapers, medicines, cigarettes, and better food. This definite political development was reported from the summer of 1947 forward, with concentration on the young POW's which SCAP describes as being developed under Soviet auspices as "mere extensions of the God-Sent Troops, the Blood Brotherhood, or the Young Officers League in the pre-war Japanese Army."

These developments indicated that just as General Nozaka of the Japan Communist Party built on the legacy of Hideki Tojo, the Soviets paralleled his activities. The younger hot-heads of the Kwantung Army were selected for "higher education" in such centres as the Moscow Indoctrination School, the Democratic School, the Youth's School, and the Political School.

SCAP reports that one example of the curriculum can be seen in the Democratic School at Khormorin which offered to the Japanese POW students: (1) International Situation; (2) Current conditions in the USSR and Japan; (3) Theory of materialism; and (4) Economics. The Political School abovementioned SCAP reports, trained pliable Japanese POW's to serve as Communist instructors in the far-flung POW camps and slave labour units behind the Soviet iron curtain. The Communist POW's then maintain ideological purity and enforced ideological discipline over their fellow Japanese POW's through General

Assembly, Courts (*Tairshu Kanpa*) which tried "anti-democratic" POW's or those found to be "un-co-operative" with the Communist programme.

Another aid in the elaborate indoctrination programme for the Japanese POW's was found in the Soviet-encouraged publication of a four-page tabloid newspaper, the Japan Press (*Nihon Shimbun*). This newspaper was printed at both Nahodka and Khabarovsk on old Manchukuoan newspaper presses, which once served the Kwantung Army. As this newspaper was practically the only source of news other than the Soviet radio broadcasts, the Japanese POW's later confessed that they believed the Japan Press when it told them that Occupied Japan was filled "with jobless vagrants, filling railroad stations without even their lunch boxes" and that "the food situation (in Japan) was terrible and children were just skin and bones."

The Japan Press fanned to white heat the anti-white racist slogans of Hideki Tojo and the bolshevik militarists, reiterated the Tojo line that Japan's principle enemy was "Anglo-Saxon imperialism", attacked the Emperor System, and provided the POW's with what the Soviets call political education; i.e., indoctrination.

The Japan Press, as SCAP reported, "played up the weakness of Japan, the 'traitorous' actions of Japanese politicians in power, the suffering of the Japanese people 'fighting off hunger and cold' and 'squirming' under the heel of American Capitalists who are making Japan a military bastion in their 'imperialistic plan to control the world....'"

Yet in spite of the propaganda about "life in the Soviet Union" and its glories, I will never forget meeting Shin Matsuoka, son of my lion-hearted trade union friend Komakichi Matsuoka, when he returned to Japan after Soviet captivity. His emaciated condition gave our eyes living proof of the terribly low standard of living initially afforded the POW's by the Soviet slave masters and butchers of humanity. It was no wonder that as the Soviets propagandized the Japanese under their control angry Japanese in Nippon popularized a song, Hill of Strange Land (*Ikoku no Oka*) which lamented the fate of the Japanese still under the cynically brutal heel of that Butcher of Asiatics, Josef Stalin.

As Japanese anger mounted, SCAP's Diplomatic Section on the 26th of April 1949 demanded of Soviet Russia that it produce information regarding the death, illness, or disappearance of the hundreds of thousands of POW's still under the control of the Soviets in violation of the Potsdam Declaration. Japanese agencies announced that since the end of the Pacific War some 200,000 Japanese POW's had died while under Soviet control, further estimated that 460,000 more POW's remained alive either in indoctrination or slave labour camps. By late April, thousands of Japanese were writing letters to Ma Gensui (SCAP) asking for the return of their loved ones. And in Tokyo a mass rally was held to voice the dissatisfaction of the Japanese.

Early in May, the Tokyo newspaper *Asahi* announced that a total of 8,000 Japanese POW's had

been tried in Soviet courts for crimes ranging from war activities to "possession of reactionary ideologies" or for "demanding better food rations." This mounting pressure on the Soviet Union to comply with the Potsdam Declaration was not without its effect for on the 6th of May, the Japan Communist Party dispatched a long telegram to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union reminding the Soviets that they had not replied to their previous and urgent request of the 18th March pleading for speedy return of the remaining POW's inside Soviet Russia. The telegram, signed by Kyuichi Tokuda, told the Soviets that "Japanese conservatives and reactionaries are deliberately making use of the so-called 'delayed repatriation' for anti-Soviet and anti-Communist propaganda." The wire concluded by meekly requesting that at least the Soviet could provide some information regarding further repatriation plans.

Months had passed without the return of a single POW from Soviet captivity, but suddenly on the 20th of May the Soviet Repatriation Authority at Moscow announced that "the remaining 95,000 Japanese POW's will be repatriated by November of 1949." This mention of "the remaining 95,000" was shocking because Japanese figures indicated clearly that the Soviets were still accountable for 398,743 POW's, the Chinese Soviets for another 60,316 POW's. As Allied spokesman in Tokyo expressed their amazement at the Soviet announcement, they declared the Russian statement "appears to be rather a hard-boiled way of breaking the bad news to Japan that

Russia through mis-treatment or neglect has killed off about 20% of the prisoners she captured." Japanese Diet members scurried up the hill to see the Soviet Mission and have a conference with the Soviet authorities, but a brusque Soviet Secretary curtly told them: "General Derevyanko is too occupied with other affairs."

Silence surrounded the Soviet Mission and no further word was received regarding the 'remaining 95,000' until on the 30th of May 1949 Allied sources in Tokyo confirmed that the Soviet continued silent and no more POW's had been repatriated. In mid-June, the Soviet authorities suddenly demanded vessels in order to return "the remaining 95,000".

On the 27th of June the repatriation ship *Takasago Maru* docked in the Japanese port city of Maizuru, which is just above Kyoto. As the ship was being tied up, the POW's aboard screamed: "We are entering enemy territory!" Then the 2,000 robust and healthy Japanese POW's broke out with the singing of the Internationale and the world communist Youth Song as they marched with strict military discipline from the repatriation vessel. Heart-sick and lonely Japanese families who had come to greet their beloved sons or husbands joined with the repatriation officials in rushing forward to greet the returning soldiers but were rebuffed as the POW's declared sternly: "We will join the Japan Communist Party, and all those 93,000 still to come will do the same!" Later reports indicated that before this hand-picked group of indoctrinated POW's left Nahodka they had been

subjected to fire-eating speeches against "the Americanization of the Japanese race," and this had been fortified by the clever use of slogan chanting and the singing of Communist songs bolstering up their Communist indoctrination.

Japan was thus shocked to its geta (wooden shoes) as these marching Communist samurai bushed past their loved ones and proclaimed their determination to constitute the nucleus for a "liberation army" in Japan which in time would deliver the Japanese people from the "colonial enslavement" of the Allied Occupation. After processing, five hundred of the POW repatriates arrived in Kyoto and rioted in concert with local Communist leaders and NCIU members who carried banners which declared: "Welcome to the returning heroes who will guard the racial independence of the motherland!" In Osaka, another rally held for the repatriated ex-soldiers resulted in a Communist riot and invasion of the Sonezaki police station. Other riots were reported in Japan, such as occurred at Fukushima where Communist union members and Communists, carrying Red Flags and singing the Internationale, concurrently invaded the Prefectural Assembly Hall to stage a sit-down strike. Other Communists battled with police at the nearby town of Taira, stormed the Taira Police Station. Six policemen were injured and the Communist riot was not quelled until large re-enforcements of Japanese Rural Police arrived on the scene.

The Communist rioting and attacks on police stations geared the return of the communized POW's with the mounting labour disorders of that time which culmi-

nated in a major murder in Tokyo and widespread guerilla sabotage of the railways of Japan. Although many of the repatriates later said they have been sharply disillusioned when they found that in truth their people were fat and healthy and enjoyed more genuine freedom than in any time in the past, nevertheless Japan was visibly shocked by the Soviet-inspired affair. Japanese observers reported that with the shock went a strong note of disapproval, but noted that historically such popular shock and disapproval had not prevented the march to power of Hideki Tojo and his bolshevik military socialists.

The second repatriation ship Eitoku Maru arrived at Maizuru on the 30th of June and again the new repatriates even before they unloaded were heard singing "their revolutionary songs..." And within a few days, the Communists again used their return to stage a series of riots and disorders in Wakamatsu, Koriyama, Nagoya, and other cities. At Kyoto, for example, a train-load of repatriates was held for forty minutes because the communized POW's fraternized with Communists as 190 of the POW's pledged to join the Communist Party of Japan. A few days later, the Eitoku Maru repatriates turned up in Tokyo where they staged a fifteen-hour sit-down strike at Tokyo Station, battled with the police, but finally were persuaded to board their train again. Later, representatives of these POW's visited the Japanese Diet to demand for all the POW's a grant of Y 15,000 in cash "as well as jobs and guarantee of livelihood." Such later arrivals as those on the Daiku Maru and

Fitoku Maru landed in complete and studied silence, refused to fill out their demobilization papers. Later arrivals varied their techniques, with some POW's pushing their loving families to one side as they marched in military formation to local Communist headquarters. As the Japanese Government rushed through Imperial Ordinance No. 500 to provide "orderly repatriation" henceforth, new arrivals accused the ship's captain of being a war criminal. And on the 8th of August, four hundred POW's marched to the Diet Building in Tokyo to present demands. Other repatriated POW's, as the Nippon Times reported on the 3rd August, "were making a general nuisance of themselves in a rash of sit-down strikes, demonstrations, and disturbances."

Meanwhile although the Soviet Union maintained that the 'remaining 95,000' constituted every last Japanese under Soviet control, the Japanese Government stubbornly insisted that an additional 300,000 Japanese POW's remained unaccounted for. Communist Diet members accused the Japanese Army of having maintained 'bad statistics' but the agitation continued and in August of 1949 a Waiting Families Speedy Repatriation of Internes Society organized a rally in Tokyo. Quivering old Japanese grandmothers wept and demanded the return of their loved ones. Members of this association, announcing that 500,000 POW's remained within the Soviet Union, then marched to Communist Party Headquarters at Yoyogi to demonstrate their anger. By the end of the month,

SCAP announced that all but 30,000 of the so-called 'remaining 95,000' had been returned to Japan.

A press report issued by the Japanese Government in Tokyo during November said that General Otozo Yamada, former Commander-in-Chief of the Kwantung Army, Lt. General Hikosaburo Hata, Chief of Staff, and General Shojiro Iida, former Commander in Burma, along with 109 other generals were still in Siberia. As the Soviets had repatriated fourteen lesser ex-Generals during February of 1949, it thus appeared that the five-year detention of this elite command group comprehended more than Red tiddly-winks.

Suspicions were confirmed early in April of 1950 when forty-two general officers of the former Imperial Japanese Army and Navy returned to Japan. Lt. General Iida, Lt. General Sonnichi Kushibuchi, and Lt. General Gennosuke Ogawa issued a prepared statement to the press: "When we think of those who died on foreign soil while in captivity, we as commanders in chief of front line forces...feel great responsibility for the war and express our deep apologies to the Japanese people." (Bold author's)

Major General Hanjiro Iketani noted that war between the Soviet Union and the United States "is only a matter of time" and warmly added that the general officers were "happy to be back in Japan before the war starts." (Bold author's.)

Thus today many of the top officers of Japan's former armed forces remain in Soviet captivity in direct violation of the Potsdam Declaration. This

fact was underlined when the Soviets staged the propaganda trial of Japanese commanders during December of 1949 charging them with having planned "germ warfare". The trial revealed that Lt. General Shiro Ishii, Lt. General Masajo Kitano, and others were tried, and present at the trial were General Yamada, Kwantung Army chief, and General Matsumura, Chief of Staff of the Kwantung Army. Perhaps therefore it was not without foundation in fact when after the Communist aggression in Korea began and then Soviet Chinese forces joined with the Korean Communists that Japanese students of the tactics being employed by the combined Communist forces in Korea indicated that Lt. General Yaheita Saito, the man who trained the Japanese 25th Division prior to the fall of Singapore, was the 'tactical brain' behind the Korean operations. General Saito has been reported "missing" since the end of the Pacific War!

Concurrent with the Soviet propaganda trial the Brotherhood Love Movement in Japan announced a campaign to secure 1,000,000 names on petitions asking for speedy repatriation of the remaining POW's. A month later, in December, after Premier Yoshida asked General Mac Arthur to make an appeal to world opinion forcing the Soviets to disgorge the detained Japanese POW's, a repatriate who had served in 24 different Soviet POW camps was interviewed by the Nippon Times (17th December 1949), said that Japanese POW's were being held as slave labourers, as human pawns for bargaining at the peace conference, and for use as soldiers "in case of a third world war." Meanwhile the Soviet Mission was

reported on the 18th of December as promising final and complete repatriation of all POW's yet held by the Soviet Union.

During this period, the Allied Council which meets weekly in Tokyo became a battleground for the American-Soviet 'cold-war' when the American representative, William Sebald, asked Soviet General Kuzma Derevyanko to explain the repatriation situation. Derevyanko curtly replied: "I do not deem it possible to discuss the question at this meeting," and then made cracks about "American imperialism", marched out of the Council chambers. Sebald later released a long document charging that 376,939 POW's remained inside the Soviet Union, estimated that 374,041 POW's had died in Soviet prison camps since the surrender of the Kwantung Army in August of 1945. Sebald charged the Russians with having maintained the Japanese under slave labour conditions. General Mac Arthur entered the picture a few days later when he said he had asked the Government of the United States to seek the aid of a neutral power in order that an investigation could be made of the POW situation. Later Australia fruitlessly asked the Soviet Government to accept an imperial investigation.

Thus as Christmas of 1949 approached, a reported four hundred "sullen Japanese" began a sit-down outside the tall gates of the Soviet Mission in Tokyo, demanded from the Soviets some word as to the fate of their loved ones in Sovietland. Some of the Japanese tried to push through the Soviet compound gates, were shoved back by armed Soviet soldiers. Mac

Arthur followed up the sit-down strike with a note that the POW situation was "gruesome and savage." And in the Diet, the House of Councillors continued its investigation of the repatriation issue, splattering the Japanese press with stories of Soviet atrocities, slave labour, ideological indoctrination, murders, and mass slaughter. One witness, for example, testified to witnessing twenty POW's being fired on by Soviet soldiers, said: "Instantly seventeen of them were killed in the stream of fire."

On Christmas Eve of 1949 a frantic Soviet propaganda apparatus did its best to counter both the POW atrocity stories and the growing knowledge outside Russia that the Soviets retained in Siberia the top officer cadre of the Kwantung Army and thousands of its best troops, were training them for the military invasion and communization of Nippon. So on this Christmas Eve the Soviet radio from Moscow dramatically announced that top-ranking Kwantung Army officers were on trial charged with "germ warfare." Kwantung Army chief Yamada and eleven other ranking officers pleaded guilty, the Soviets reported, as the Soviets charged that the Japanese Army "germ warfare unit" had been organized during 1936 "by order of Emperor Hirohito." The trial occupied only eight days and stiff sentences were meted out although the published transcripts of the case * show it to be

one of the phoniest bits of Soviet propaganda engineered since Josef Stalin said he signed the pact with Hitler in order to promote "peace and democracy."

As the Soviets propagandized about "germ warfare" through press and radio, Emperor Hirohito in Tokyo briskly warmed his hands over an hibachi (charcoal brazier) and traced out the Chinese and Japanese characters for the traditional New Year's poems issued by the Emperor. One of the 1 January 1950 short poems written by the Emperor of Japan said:

With the nation I wait, my heart in pain—
For those for whom we wait in vain!

Then Hirohito wrote a companion verse which expressed quite well the collective mind of his lonely and suffering people:

Let's welcome home those who have returned
After suffering so long on alien soil.

Three days later, the Americans again raised the POW issue before the Allied Council in Tokyo but the Soviet General declared the matter "unlawful to place upon the agenda." Derevyanko stalked out from the Council chamber. Sebald subsequently released a note from Secretary of State Dean Acheson to the Soviet Government demanding word of the mission 376,929 POW's. Asked the Nippon Times: "Has a second grisly Belsen death camp been executed in the wastes of Siberia?"

* "Trial of Former Members of the Japanese Armed Forces Charged With Manufacturing and Employing Bacteriological Weapons", issued by the State Publishers of Political Literature, Moscow, 1950.

The increasing pressure drew Soviet blood, for on the 9th of January the Soviets announced that, after all, they did have some more POW's awaiting repatriation. Early in January, three young women arrived back in Japan from Soviet captivity, two of them former typists attached to the headquarters of the Kwantung Army in Manchuria. All three were Communists, refused any interview by "the bourgeois press", and also refused newsmen permission to take their photograph. Interestingly, when another shipment of POW's returned in late January, they were reportedly "sharply divided ideologically into two camps, the anti-Communist...and pro-Communist." Reflecting the Cominform instructions that the line be changed in Japan, the groups demanded of the Japan Communist Party "a change in tactics." Ten days later, another 2,500 POW's were returned to Japan, and in February 2,203 POW's were repatriated of whom 1,899 were reported as "leftists" who demanded of the Japanese Government "free railway pass with a one-month limit, a special allowance of Yen 70,000, a travelling expense of Y 50,000" and so forth. Thus during 1950 there came to an end the repatriation of the first echelon of the Soviet indoctrinated POW's. Meanwhile Sebald again raised the issue of repatriation before the Allied Council and for the third time the apoplectic, irate Soviet General retired.

Early in the same February of 1950, the Nichiren sect staged a public prayer meeting in Tokyo's Hibiya Park to pray for the early return of the POW's still held by the Soviet Union and Soviet China, and then

in June the police were moved to ban another "sit-down" demonstration scheduled to harass the Soviet Embassy in Tokyo. Although Radio Moscow curtly said that repatriation had completely ended, over a hundred families with unrepatriated POW's in Soviet hands visited Premier Yoshida during July to ask that the Japanese Government, "press...its repatriation policy."

Concurrently the Allied Occupation published in Japan reports that Japanese POW's in Russian hands had been forced to "eat bark from trees, frogs, snails, and sludge to keep alive during the winter of 1945-46," the harried Russians again went into action. Ambassador Alexander S. Panyushkin on the 1st of February 1950 proposed to the Governments of the United States, Britain, and other interested countries that Emperor Hirohito and several other leading Japanese "be tried as war criminals in an international court", charged with "germ warfare." The State Department responded that the Soviet Union was again using wild charges as a smokescreen to mask the gruesome POW situation as Pravda denounced the "monstrous crimes of the Japanese imperialists." Apparently the short poems written by Hirohita had so enraged the Kremlin that the Politbureau literally blew its ideological gaskets. And as will be remembered, the Cominform coincidentally changed the line of the Japan Communist Party, told the Japanese Reds to do something about the Emperor. On the 11th of February, Red Flag endorsed the Russian demand for the trial of Hirohito, and then dutifully Communist General Secretary Kyuichi Tokuda rose in the Diet on the 2nd of March

to demand that Emperor Hirohito go on trial as a war criminal. Japan's March Winds were smothered by the sucked-in breath of the Japanese nation.

During May, General Mac Arthur met with leaders of the repatriation movement, "To Save Our More Than 300,000 Brothers", declared that despite Soviet and Tass Statements, he believed many of the Japanese were still quite alive and behind the Soviet iron curtain. On the 10th of May, SCAP forwarded a Japanese resolution to the United Nations which asked for "information on 370,000 Japanese prisoners believed still in Russian hands." On the 17th of July, Tass reiterated the Soviet stand that repatriation had been completed. The Japanese agitation continued, the matter was ultimately referred to the UN, and on the 11th of December the United Nations voted to set up an inquiry board to investigate the fate of 1,500,000 POW's still held by the Soviet Union—most of them either German or Japanese

The Maizuru Repatriation Board in June announced that its examination of 2,000 letters from Soviet Chinese-held Japanese indicated that 107,000 Japanese POW's remained in the hands of the Soviet Chinese Government. 62,000 POW's—all Japanese servicemen—were reported in the Soviet Chinese Army; 45,000 others were described as "miners, farmers, and technicians."

As an indication that a second echelon of communized Japanese troops would be repatriated at the pleasure of the Communists, the Moscow radio reported a few times during June of 1950 that Soviet China held 45,000 Japanese, noted that 20,000 of them were being prepared for repatriation to Nippon. A later report from Hongkong said that the Japanese in Soviet China totalled 130,000, revealed "they had been vigorously indoctrinated and inducted into the Communist Army."

The lies of the Soviet butchers of Asian humanity were sharply underscored when during 1950 word came that the Japanese were receiving letters from Soviet China where un-repatriated Japanese technicians and ex-soldiers were writing that 36,000 Japanese were concentrated near Hainan, springboard for sea invasion of Indochina. Some reported they were serving as auxiliaries with the Soviet Chinese Army of Gen. Lin Po in the Fourth Red Army that turned up in Manchuria after the outbreak of the Korean aggression.

The Panamanian vessel, Nolberg, arrived in Japan's port city of Moji on the 12th of October, en route from Chinhwangtao, in North China, with 19 repatriated Japanese aboard. One, Mr. Yoshitoshi Kuroki, estimated that there were 60,000 Japanese still in Manchuria with more Japanese "detained as technicians" in Hankow, Peking, Tsinan, Taiyung, Tientsin, and other Soviet Chinese cities. Presence of the Japanese has since been re-confirmed by the National Council of Repatriation of Japanese which revealed in Tokyo that an estimated 100,000 Japanese civilians and former military personnel remain inside Soviet

China. As there have been reports of Soviet activities in Sakhalin in the assembly of a Japanese People's Liberation Army, it is entirely possible that when the Japanese troops still behind the iron curtain ultimately reach Japan, they will constitute the cadre of old soldiers of the Kwantung Army ready to join with certainly the well indoctrinated Japanese returned during 1949. For was winning in China. The need of General Nozaka for a hard core of Communist soldiers coincided with expansion of the Soviet's Eurasian military base.

The close connection between Stalin, Mao Tze-tung, and Communist General Sanzo Nozaka is quite clear vis-a-vis the political and military exploitation of as many of the ex-servicemen of Japan as possible in armed seizure of power. General Nozaka, before he left Yenan in 1945, is reported to have advised the Soviet Chinese led by Mao Tze-tung to retain all Japanese POW's for the use of the Soviet Chinese government. And as was revealed during sensational Japanese Diet investigations held during early 1950, individual affidavits of forty-four Japanese soldiers of POW's and return to Japan only those who had become "democratic". One ex-POW, Mr. Sueharu Kan, testified that a letter allegedly written by Communist Tokuda had been read to Japanese POW's by a Secretary General of the Japanese Communist Party, re-

Liberation Army, it is entirely possible that when the Japanese troops still behind the iron curtain ultimately reach Japan, they will constitute the cadre of old soldiers of the Kwantung Army ready to join with certainly the well indoctrinated Japanese returned during 1949. For was winning in China. The need of General Nozaka for a hard core of Communist soldiers coincided with expansion of the Soviet's Eurasian military base.

"Quests that in the name of the Party thought education" be undertaken for Japanese prisoners and no Japanese prisoner be repatriated unless they are thoroughly Communists."

SCAP at first did not seem to realize the import of the charges, but after British Commonwealth member of the Allied Council, one Col. W. R. Hodgson, insisted on investigation and expressed his fear that the Americans would "bury this question in the Council's archives" SCAP ordered the Japanese to make a complete investigation.

The Japanese Un-Japanese Activities Committee of the Diet swung into action as Tokuda protested that he had had no communication with anyone in the Soviet Union other than for an airmail letter sent on the 5th - May 1949 demanding speedy repatriation. When the doughty Communist appeared before the Committee, he told them to go to Moscow to get evidence. Meanwhile Communist hecklers at the hearing were twice forcibly ejected from the room. Subsequent hearings developed evidence that just prior to return of the communized POW's of June 1949, Tokuda had dispatched Communist Order No. 347 to lower echelons of the Party advising them that repatriates would soon arrive "far more ready for positive action" and promising that the new group of POW's would be possessed of "a determination to fight for the cause of Communism by joining the Party organization." The Upper House of the Diet on the 29th of March approved the findings of the Un-Japanese Activities

Committee, recommended that drastic action be taken against Comrade Tokuda, added the charge: "That the Communists called on families of repatriates who had testified or intended to testify before the Upper House Committee and threatened them with dire consequences for their 'anti-democratic' attitude."

That the Japanese legislators knew what they were talking about was graphically displayed when 32-year-old Sueharu Kan wrote a letter of fond farewell to his wife, wrote five other farewell letters, and then went to Tokyo's Jichijoji Station. At 7:40 p.m. on the 6th of April, Kan jumped in front of a Tachikawa-bound electric train and was instantly killed.

Police revealed that Kan had been an interpreter intimately involved in the Communist conspiracy. Police also revealed that key witness Sueharu Kan had previously received threatening letters which warned of death unless he kept his mouth shut.

Meanwhile the hearings in the Diet continued with more violent scenes in which the investigators told Tokuda "Hurry Up!" as Communist visitors screamed at the Diet members: "Damare! (Shut Up!)." Although charges were eventually filed against Tokuda, the Mac Arthur Great Purge of June 1950 and the disappearance of the wily Communist ended the affair for the nonce.

There have been conflicting reports as to what happened to the communized repatriates since their

return in 1949. General Mac Arthur was interviewed by Mr. P. J. Mc Evoy* and declared: "When these men ignored their families who had come to welcome them... and marched off to the nearest Communist Headquarters to sing Party songs and wave banners, the Japanese... were first shocked beyond words, then later completely disgusted. It was a psychological boomerang and a major propaganda defeat." The Moscow New Times reported † the Soviet version when it declared that 66,434 ex-POW's had written a collective letter to Generalissimo Stalin declaring: "We solemnly vow... to fight selflessly for inviolable friendship between the Japanese people and the people of the Soviet Union, because only this friendship can bring our people happiness, national independence, peace, freedom, and democracy." The Japanese report that as of the 31st of May 1950 three-fourths of the 1949-1950 repatriated POW's have jobs or are in business for themselves. An American missionary Dr. Ruth Seabury reported later that although the sensational return of the communized POW's "nearly scared everyone to death" nevertheless in time they settled down and are "escaping from Communism."

Surveying the record of the Soviet Union's illegal detention of Japanese POW's in cynical violation of the Potsdam Declaration, the Soviet Union which has preached "peace and democracy" throughout Asia,

* Readers Digest, May, 1950.

† Moscow, New Times, 10 May 1950.

during the past five years and has attempted to play the role of Asiatic "elder brother" to the Japanese now stands nakedly revealed as a fascist Hitler-like mass murderer of Japanese prisoners-of-war. One sample of Sovietland "peace and democracy" was unearthed during the spring of 1949 when the "Dawn Prayer" case offered positive proof to the Japanese people of the hypocritical, chauvinistic, and anti-national character of Sovietland's "democracy".

During late 1947 and through into early 1948, a total of fourteen books were written by Soviet-held POWs returned later to Japan. Some of the books praised the Soviets; most of them bitterly condemned Soviet treatment. One of the stories which ran through several of these books reported gruesome atrocities that took place in the Ulan Bator camp in Outer Mongolia. First reported in the Soviet-published Japan Press (*Nihon Shimbun*), the case was termed "A Prayer at Dawn" (*Akatsuki ni Inoru*) and involved a certain Corporal Yoshimura who had brutally executed Japanese POWs. One of the books, *Border Tales* (*Kokkyo Monogatari*), written by Shojiro Shimizu, noted that the men at Ulan Bator were worked until emaciated. "The men became bloated and greenish in colour" he said. Shimizu said that when men were no longer able to work, they went before a drum-head court martial at which Corporal Yoshimura, a former *kempei-tai* (MP), sentenced them to death. The men were tied to trees after being stripped of their ragged clothing.

"In the bitter sub-zero weather of Outer Mongolia, they first began to stamp in an effort to ward off

the piercing cold. Slowly the fingers on both hands freeze, become waxen... Slowly, surely death approaches. The coldest time of the day comes just before the dawn. The men after an all-night struggle to keep alive reach a point of utter exhaustion. Slowly wiod, inhuman voices begin to utter curses against Yoshimura... The eastern skies lighten. In a last desperate effort... they stretch themselves towards the East as far as the ropes will allow. With arms raised, as if in prayer to catch as much as possible of the sun's rays, the men topple stark frozen to death, with a last 'Prayer at Dawn' on their lips."

The story of Shimizu, verified in other Japanese-authored books seemed so fantastic that many dismissed it as fabricated anti-Soviet propaganda. But when the newspaper *Asahi* scooped Japan on the 15th of March 1949 by relating that Corporal Yoshimura had been found, the country reacted quickly. Corporal Yoshimura, actually Shigeyoshi Ikeda, had been found alive and healthy and living on the island of Fukue, a few hours by boat from the historic port city of Nagasaki in Japan's Kyushu. It then developed that Ikeda and three hundred other Japanese soldiers had been taken prisoner in Jehol during October of 1945, were shipped to Ulan Bator where they went to work in a wool factory and other small plants in the area.

Ikeda, as a former Sergeant-Major of the Japanese Kempeitai, was selected by a Lt. Mochob to raise the production level of the soldiers with the agreement

that the Soviet-paid incentive bonus would be split 50 : 50 between Mochob and Ikeda. Shimizu reported that Ikeda ordered lagging workers killed by torture after he organized a group of soldier gangsters (*gorotsuki*) to enforce discipline. Many of the men so butchered by Ikeda were eliminated by beating with spades or the more picturesque though equally effective "Prayer at Dawn" technique.

Ikeda on the 23rd of March confirmed that a minimum of fifteen Japanese soldiers had been liquidated by the freeze treatment in temperatures of 20° below zero. Ikeda denied any responsibility, claimed that he only carried out the orders of his superiors. Six days later, six Japanese POW's who had witnessed the "Prayer at Dawn" executions filed a case against Ikeda, charging him with torture and murder of fellow Japanese. Meanwhile the Roger Baldwin-inspired Japanese Civil Liberties Union conducted its own investigation, reported on the 29th of March that while other Japanese units under Soviet control showed a work efficiency of 15%, the Yoshimura (Ikeda) Corps had topped 80.5% for Ikeda had kept his men working until midnights with meals.

The Japanese Diet moved in on the case and the Upper House Special Repatriation Committee sent for Ikeda, opened hearings. When Ikeda appeared before the Committee, he testified that he had carried out the butchery "on orders of the Soviet authorities." The hearings dragged on, Japan was given a first-hand account of Soviet "peace and democracy", and

finally with the development of sufficient evidence and eye-witnesses of the atrocities, Ikeda on the 4th of August, was formally indicted by the Tokyo District Public Procurator's Office for leading nine Japanese POW's to death and abandoning others to their death. As the case proceeded, one dramatic highlight came when Yoshiki Hoshino, brother of Hideki Tojo's collaborator genius Naoki Hoshino, now a member of the Japanese Diet, attacked the Ikeda case "on the grounds that the whole affair was a sinister plot to 'smear' the glorious Soviet Union. It then developed that Yoshiki Hoshino was in Shanghai before the Pacific War, was an underground member of the Communist Party, and had returned to Japan after the surrender as a "sleeper" ready and willing to aid the Soviet Union if and when called on.

Meanwhile the Ikeda trial continued during the spring of 1950, and finally the prosecution demanded a ten-year prison term for Corporal Yoshimura. Ikeda was subsequently adjudged guilty, and the now 35-year old Ikeda was sentenced during July to serve five years at hard labour. Thus ended the sensational "Prayer at Dawn" case.

In summary, the programme of Stalin vis-a-vis Japanese POW's comprehended the use of the vast reservoir of Japanese prisoners bagged by the Soviets during their one-week war against Japan as a source of slave labour battalions during the initial post-war

years. Tens of thousands of Japanese laboured, tens of thousands of Japanese died to aid in completing Stalin's Five Year Plan in four years. Those who were old, sick, or unfit for the rigours of military life were sent back to Japan to burden the Americans. The remaining cream of the captured Japanese POW's were then increasingly indoctrinated, with careful selection of the officers and non-coms to provide them with higher ideological indoctrination. Then in 1949, as the Kremlin aggressors moved closer to all-out war in Southeast Asia, the first or advance echelon of indoctrinated POW's arrived back in Nippon.

The second echelon of top commanders, staff officers, and cadres of fanatical young Japanese who were unshaven when captured by the Russians remain behind Stalin's Asian iron curtain. Some are with the Soviets while others fight with the Soviet Chinese Army. That they know full well what goes on in Sovietland can be seen from the statement of the returning ex-General that he was happy to be home before the war begins!

After the Party went underground in Japan during the June-July purge, and as the Korean struggle defending for the realization of Tojo's dream of a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, General Nozaka disappeared and perhaps plans to re-enter Japan with the Japanese People's Racial Liberation Army. As reports put this force in Sakhalin, just north of Japan, it would appear that the first Soviet strike at Japan,

will be felt in the northernmost island of Hokkaido, an island where the statues of the Japanese Governors General now embarrassingly face northwards! Thus Stalin exploited the hundreds of thousands of Japanese POW's as slave labour in order to extort "hidden reparations" from Japan. More important, he retains tens of thousands of the youngest and more virile for ultimate use as a military force implementing Stalin's imperialist policies requiring the reduction of Japan to the status of an industrial colony of Soviet power.